

This Week in Congress

May 17, 2010

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." This week's headlines are:

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CBO Confirms Health Care Law Will Cost Even More Than Projected

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) updated its spending estimate this week of the new health care reform law, tacking on an additional \$115 billion to the law's \$938 billion price tag. The CBO report is yet another reminder that the new health care law is the wrong direction for our country and for Kansas at this critical time because it spends money we do not have and will grow government at an unprecedented scale. This law pushes \$20 billion in unfunded mandates onto Kansas and other states that cannot absorb the costs. At a time when we need to be focused on job development, these so-called "reforms" will exacerbate our budget problems in Kansas and stifle economic recovery.

When you add up all the things this law requires but does not pay for, the total cost is closer to \$1.33 trillion. With our national debt already over \$12 trillion, I have argued from the beginning that this plan is fiscally irresponsible and will drive us further into the hole. This is why it is so important that we replace this flawed plan with commonsense reforms that are fiscally sustainable and will lower health care costs for families and businesses.

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EPA's New Rule Will Hurt American Job Creation

This week, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued its final “tailoring rule,” which will require energy producers and manufacturers, under the Clean Air Act, to seek permits if their operations exceed EPA-established emission standards. With the unemployment rate hovering at nearly ten percent, this rule could not come at a worse time for the U.S. economy and the thousands of Kansans who are looking for work. These new regulations will increase the cost of electricity, motor fuel, building materials and everyday consumer goods. The bottom line is that businesses are reluctant to hire new workers because of the increased cost and uncertainty of doing business. American businesses are the true job creators and they need our support to get our economy back on track. Instead of supporting businesses, the Administration has decided to heap on additional fees and penalties that will threaten thousands of jobs and hurt our economy.

It is more important now than ever that Congress join together and pass a disapproval resolution to stop further action on this EPA rule. Last December, I was the first Member of Congress to introduce a disapproval resolution to invalidate EPA's greenhouse gas regulation when I introduced H. J. Res. 66. This year, I have joined with many colleagues to sponsor legislation that will have the same effect. [Click here](#) to read more of my thoughts on this subject.

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Requiring Fairness in Air Force Refueling Tanker Competition

This week, I cosponsored legislation to require the Department of Defense (DOD) to account for illegal subsidies in their purchases, including the next generation Air Force refueling tanker. Recently, the World Trade Organization ruled that European governments have illegally subsidized Airbus, a competitor to Boeing in the tanker competition. These government subsidies directly impact the cost of their aircraft and give Airbus an unfair advantage over American companies. To make sure that American companies are treated fairly, the Fair Defense Competition Act, introduced by Senator Sam Brownback and Representative Todd Tiahrt, would require illegal subsidies to be taken into consideration by the U.S. military.

On Thursday, I participated in a press conference on this issue with my colleagues and spoke about the importance of leveling the playing field and protecting American jobs. Given our nation's high unemployment rate, the Pentagon should not be working against millions of Americans who are looking for work. [Click here](#) to view a photo from the press conference.



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Congratulating 2010 Graduates on Outstanding Achievement

College graduation is an exciting time for both students and their families, who have sacrificed to make this special day possible. My oldest daughter, Kelsey, graduated from Kansas State University this weekend and I joined many proud parents in the Bramlage Coliseum to celebrate the graduates' success. This week, I also congratulated graduates at Highland Community College and Manhattan Area Technical College for their outstanding achievement. Thanks to the many faculty members, coaches and friends who impacted the lives of these students and contributed to their success.

Highland Community College: For more than a century, Highland Community College has given Kansas students access to affordable higher education as the first college founded in Kansas. On Friday evening, I visited with the students about their future and the decisions they will encounter. I challenged the graduates to strive for excellence, to become people of character and to put others first in life. I believe that individuals who volunteer their time in churches, neighborhoods and communities can often have the greatest impact and change lives for the better. Thanks to President David Reist for the kind invitation to speak with the graduates. Congratulations and best wishes to the Class of 2010.

[Click here](#)

to view a photo of the graduation ceremony.

[Click here](#)

to read my comments to the graduates.



Manhattan Area Technical College: The Manhattan Area Technical College (MATC) has been providing Kansans excellent career training and continuing education for the past forty-five years. In today's economy, many jobs require technical skills, so having the right education and training is essential to be competitive. During my remarks, I told the graduates that true fulfillment in life does not come with greater success; it comes when you live your life devoted to a greater purpose than yourself. I challenged the students to not just make a dollar, but to make a difference in life. Thanks to President Rob Edleston for the invitation to speak with the graduates. I wish all of those graduating this spring continued success and happiness as they embark on a new chapter in life.

[Click here](#) to view a photo from the graduation ceremony.

[Click here](#) to read my comments to the graduates.





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